Ill effects of nuclear test

†2339. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state

(a) the type of ill effects likely to be caused as a result of nuclear tests conducted in the country; and

(b) whether such tests can be carried out some other places also besides Rajasthan, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Fully contained underground nuclear tests as conducted by India have no ill effects on nature or the environment.

(b) Such tests can be undertaken only at those places, which fulfil certain attributes with respect to properties of rock strata, geohydrology, isolation of the place from populated area etc.

Prevention of nuclear radiation

2340. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem, "Pill to prevent N-radiation" appearing in the Times of India, dated the 14th June, 2002;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether any study has been/is being conducted in the matter so as to find out any pharmaceutical agent to prevent/counteract the effect of radiation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is well known that potassium iodide is a good prophylactic agent which brings about a reduction in the uptake of radioactive iodine by thyroid if it is administered promptly.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) While potassium iodide can effectively block uptake of radioactive iodine and take care of significant part of internal dose, research is also being pursued for development of radio protectors and decorporation agents.

(d) Stocks of potassium iodide tablet are kept in all nuclear power plants sites as part of the Department's radiological emergency preparedness plans. Some decorporation agents are also available in specific cases.

Purchase of electricity from Nuclear Power Corporation

2341. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the State Electricity Boards are reluctant to purchase electricity from the Nuclear Power Corporation (NPC) as it is expensive in comparison to Thermal/Hydel Power;

(b) if so, the outstanding amount to be recovered by NPC from the State Electricity Boards; and

(c) the steps taken to bring nuclear Power rates at par with Thermal/ Hydel Power?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) During the financial year 2001-2002, nuclear power stations generated about 19,200 Million Units of electricity at a capacity factor of about 85%. The total power was absorbed by the concerned State Electricity Boards (SEBs) as per their allocations except for a few, who for their own reasons did not agree to take their share. In such cases, the power has been diverted to other needy SEBs. In regard to generation tariff, it varies from station to station depending on the capital cost or the level at which tariffs have been negotiated. The average tariff from all nuclear power stations, for the year 2001-02 was 239 paise/kWh which is quite comparable with the tariffs at which power is being offered by the thermal power stations.

(b) The total outstanding amount to be received by NPCIL from